

It's Smart To Be Gallery Wise!

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

AND ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

N E W SF L A S H E S

April 1,

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CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PAINTERS: Several years ago the Gallery inaugurated a new type of contemporary exhibitions which it was planned to hold annually in April. These are devoted to a series of one man shows in which contemporary American painters who had not yet been seen adequately in Kansas City would be represented by not less than ten canvases. In this way all phases of the artist's work could be seen and the plan has met with great approval on the part of the painters themselves, many of whom object to being represented in an exhibition by an isolated example. The exhibition was not held last April when a group of English paintings was substituted because of the interest centered in the Coronation.

The policy will be resumed this year and the work of Jon Corbino, Sidney Laufman, Reginald Marsh, Waldo Peirce, and Frederic Taubes will be included. All five of these men have had one man exhibitions in New York this season and have won the acclaim of critics. Several of them have had sections of recent magazines devoted to colour reproductions and it may be said that they are the most discussed painters today in art circles.

Jon Corbino is the youngest of the group. He was born in Italy in 1905 but was brought to America as a child. Most of his training has been with the Art Students' League in New York. He had his first exhibition when eighteen but it was when he won a prize at the annual exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago and received a Guggenheim Scholarship for two years, that his work began to receive favorable comment. Since then he has been invited to every important exhibition in America, has been purchased by a number of museums and today is the most discussed of the younger group. There is little of Italy in the work of Corbino. His massive, muscular forms, his rearing, stampeding horses, his fluid brush and his brilliantly rich colour recall Rubens and the Flemish artists more than any other school. At times his subject matter recalls Delacroix or Gericault, but he is American first and last. He is often romantic and imaginative, but the basis of his theme is knowledge. He spent several years on a stock farm and knows horses and cattle first hand. He bows to no one in his mastery of full-blooded, thrilling colour.

Sidney Laufman was born in Cleveland in 1891 and has studied in America and in Paris. He is primarily a landscape painter and has a romantic approach to nature. His palette is a most subtle and harmonious one and he has often been called the painter of greens. His early landscapes are almost reminiscent of Corot, so sure is his tonal relations, and so quiet is his mood. Last summer he spent several months in New Jersey and has developed an entirely new colour scheme which is richer and more full, pulsating with live greens and bright yellows, and his canvases are flooded with sun light. These new paintings are purely American, but the beauty of America's country side. Of them one critic has remarked: "Not a telegraph pole, not a filling station, none of the stage settings of the slums of either big or little towns seems to have caught his eye, only the sheer beauty."

Reginald Marsh was born in Paris of American parents, in 1898. He studied with Kenneth Hayes Miller, but there is none of the suavity of his master in his characteristic canvases which are invariably painted in tempera. Marsh is the hard-boiled commentator of the Bowery, Coney Island, Harlem and, with his often satirical humor, he gives us society night at the Metropolitan Opera or some lurid movie on 14th Street. His orbit never seems to extend beyond New York City and he has only scratched its surface. His colour can be subtle or strident as the case may be and his compositions, usually giving a crowded appearance, are really worked out most carefully. His finished canvases are built up of many meticulous sketches that he makes as he wanders about those sections of New York that he

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loves, note book in hand. Some of his best known canvases, such as "Coney Island Beach", "Monday Night at the Metropolitan", "A Paramount Picture", and "Promenade" will be included in this exhibition.

Waldo Peirce was born in Bangor Maine, in 1884 and after studying in New York at the Art Students' League and at the Julien Academy in Paris, he returned to Maine and still makes it his home. His painting career has been a most interesting one. Formerly considered the bad boy of painting, his early work was rarely taken seriously. For the past six or seven years he has not been seen in the Galleries, then this fall he bloomed forth with a retrospective show that brought unreserved praise from all critics. Success came almost overnight. He was bought by museums and collectors, "Time" commissioned him to paint a portrait of his friend Ernest Hemingway for its cover. His lusty, joyous love of life was not calmed but merely controlled; the rich, full tones of his palette remain and there is an added rhythm to his brush. Peirce has become one of the most sought after painters in America today. His subject matter centers usually on his familiar Maine, and always his twins are conspicuous in his canvases. One of the finest, "Concert Champetre", in which the two children give an impromptu and al fresco concert, will be included in this exhibition as well as characteristic and powerful self-portrait.

The fifth artist is Frederick Taubes who was born in Austria in 1900 and who has lived in the United States for the past eight years and is now an American citizen. He began the study of art in Vienna at the age of six and has painted ever since. In Munich he worked with the great technician Max Doerner, which accounts for his superb handling of his medium. He is one of the most cosmopolitan painters in America today as he has traveled and lived in the orient and has exhibited in Berlin, Paris, Jerusalem, Warsaw, and other world centers. His abilities are most varied. He is equally at home in figure painting and in still life and his usual approach is a poetic and romantic one. His palette is subdued, and grays, greens, browns, with occasional blues and individual pinks predominate. Most distinguished of all is his command of his medium, which has led Emily Genauer to say: "Taubes, than whom there is no superior technician in the country. He correlates volumes, tension, colour, textures, and lines into a formal organization distinguished for its mastery of plastic means".

This exhibition, certainly the most important of the current season, will open on Sunday, April 3rd, and will continue through the month. The paintings will be discussed by the Director in the Wednesday Evening lecture of April 6th.

MASTERPIECE OF THE MONTH: For April, the Masterpiece of the month will be the second acquisition for the year 1938 for the permanent collection. It is an Altarpiece in the form of a triptych dating from the first part of the 16th century and of Dutch origin. The central panel represents the Resurrection and the two wings are occupied by portraits of the donors accompanied by their patron saints, the Magdalen and Saint Andrew.

It is a superb example of the sincere religious art of the Netherlands before the iconoclasm of the Reformation. Full of the drama and emotion of this tense episode in the life of the Saviour, it is especially suitable for the month of Easter. The risen Christ floats in the heavens, His voluminous red robe billowing against the deep blue and rose of the morning sky and an imaginative landscape of crags and turretted castles. About the empty tomb, sleeping soldiers are sprawled, dressed in contemporary armor. Angels hover about the scene, and in the background, the Marys hasten to the sarcophagus to mourn. A sense of mystery and foreboding is lightened by the exquisite gamut of colours used in the figures in the foreground, blues, greens, full reds, clear yellows, mauves, and purples. One of the loveliest figures in all Dutch art is the graceful Magdalen in the right wing and the heads of the donors are as fine as the portraits of Holbein.

The acquisition of the Altarpiece for the permanent collection rivals in importance the Cézanne "Landscape" which was announced last month.

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WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURES: On April 6th, the lecture will be given by Mr. Gardner and the paintings in the important loan exhibition of five contemporary American artists will be discussed. It will be illustrated by the canvases from the show which will be brought to the Auditorium.

The lecture for April 13th will also be given by the Director and at that time 18th century sculpture, predominately French, will be discussed. The following week the sculpture of the 19th century will be considered. This is a most important period as it encompasses the work of Rodin and the beginning of the modern movement in the plastic arts.

On April 27th, Mr. Sickman will discuss Primitive Sculpture, which forms a most interesting and necessary background for the understanding of contemporary sculpture.

FRIENDS OF ART: The study classes of the Friends of Art will be held in the Library on the Wednesday mornings of April 13th and 27th, and the paintings in the Loan Exhibition of Contemporary American artists will be considered.

STAFF ACTIVITIES: The Director will lecture in Independence, Kansas, on April 27th to the Kansas Federation of Women's Clubs. His subject will be "Modern Art".

Mr. Sickman has been invited to lecture on Oriental Art at the Cincinnati Museum on April 26th.

MARIONETTE PLAY: On Saturday morning, April 23rd, at ten-thirty, the members of the marionette class will present "The Life of Robert Fulton", an original play by Miss Lindsay Hughes. The dolls are made and manipulated by the children of the class under the direction of Mr. Jerry Manning, assisted by Miss Virginia Cates, Miss Miriam Lee Hess, and Miss Mary Jane Shean.

C A L E N D A R

Sun., April 3 - 5:30 - Concert by Mu Phi Musical Sorority
Wed., April 6 - 8:00 - Lecture - Contemporary American Painting -
Mr. Gardner
Sun., April 10 - 5:30 - Concert - Sigma Alpha Iota
Wed., April 13 - 11:00 - Friends of Art Study Class
Wed., April 13 - 8:00 - Lecture - 18th century Sculpture - Mr.
Gardner
Wed., April 20 - 8:00 - Lecture - 19th century Sculpture - Mr.
Gardner
Wed., April 27 - 11:00 - Friends of Art Study Class
Wed., April 27 - 8:00 - Lecture - Primitive Sculpture - Mr. Sickman